1: Blackwood E-5 (1929-1930) 1935
ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

there are two intended for this purpose. One is for use when the breasts are painful because the child has died:

Karasinos (*Acanthaceae*).

Scrape the skin of the root and chew it with the betel-mixture. Spit the mash on to your hand and press it against the woman's breasts. Then scrape the skin off a branch of the same shrub and bury it under the bed on which the woman sleeps.

The other is used to mitigate pain in the breasts at the time of weaning:

Bō (a species of bracken, *Pteris*).

Rub the leaves between the hands, add lime, and massage the breasts.

There is no belief that suckling prevents conception, and this is definitely not the case. Lactation has nothing to do with the period of abstinence from sexual intercourse prescribed after child-birth. The child continues to take the breast long after this has been resumed. Basil Thompson says that with Fijian women, in spite of a prolonged period of suckling, 'menstruation often recommences at the 3rd or 4th month after parturition, and cohabitation, even at this early stage, often results in a second pregnancy' (1908, p. 177). So far as I am aware, the flux is not resumed so early in the women of Bougainville—at any rate some of the women I knew well, whose babies were a year or so old, told me that they had not yet begun to menstruate again since the birth. But the strict taboo enforcing abstinence from sexual intercourse for a period I estimate as at least two years after child-birth (see p. 156) ensures that a second pregnancy shall not follow very quickly.

Suckling is continued for four or five years—judging from the size and condition of some children who were still at the breast. But if another pregnancy occurs, the first child is weaned. A woman will never attempt to suckle both a baby and an elder child, as I have seen done by some American Indian women.

Weaning is, in the normal course of affairs, a gradual process, other food, beginning with taro, which is given from birth, being gradually increased in quantity and variety. The child, according to the statements of the women, makes, of its own account, fewer and fewer demands upon its mother, who accedes to them till they cease. There would seem, accordingly, to be no shock to

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ON6 Buka ON6
Kurtatchi

462 the child at weaning. No instance of a child being forbidden the breast on account of a second pregnancy came under my personal observation, and I have no details as to its effect on the child, either physiologically or psychologically.

TWINS

845 Twins (*pūna*) are much disliked. The only reason I could elicit for this was that the mother could not look after them both properly, and that she did not like to hear them cry. Where no cradle is used, and the baby is the constant companion of its mother no matter what her occupation, it is easy to understand that two babies are [847] altogether beyond her power to cope with. No one would admit that such infants were actually killed or abandoned, but there was general agreement that the mother simply neglected to give one or both of them proper attention, with the result that both died, or the more vigorous of the two might survive and be cared for as usual. The fate of the twins rests entirely with the mother.

No twin birth occurred in any of the villages under my observation during my stay. One of the Kurtatchi women had borne twins, both female, some years before by a former husband now dead. Both children died during lactation, and rumour had it that she had deliberately neglected them. Of a pair of twins born to a couple in the neighbouring village of Ruri, one, a male, is now adult, the other, a female, died in early childhood from a septic sore.

Two explanations of the cause of twins were given to me, from different villages, both from reliable informants. One was that the woman had eaten some 'double' fruit, such as twin bananas or areca-nuts. The other alleged cause was that the woman's husband, in ignorance of the fact that she was pregnant, or simply out of carelessness, had, while cohabiting with her, pressed too heavily on her abdomen, thus causing the blood that was making the child to divide into two streams, one going to the right side and the other to the left, resulting in the formation of two children instead of one.

Mr. Gordon Thomas brought to my notice a case of twins born on the island of Pororan, which was explained by the fact that the husband had had intercourse with his wife after having attended a bush feast. Both babies died. He told me also that he knew of the following deformities: a double-headed child, one child with